

Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 188632 TOSEC 080260

FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT:PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WASHINGTON POST BY-LINER BY THOMAS W. LIPPMAN, AUGUST 10 "ARABS SEEN HOLDING FALSE VIEW OF US-ISRAELI TIES."
2. JERUSALEM--THROUGHOUT THEIR DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN TO RECONVENE THE GENEVA MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE AND EXTRACT AN ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT FROM ISRAEL, THE MAJOR ARAB STATES HAVE MANEUVERED ON THE BASIS OF SET OF ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THIS COUNTRY AND ITS RELATIONS TO THE UNITED STATES. IN A WEEK OF CONVERSATION WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, OPPOSITION LEADERS AND OTHER PROMINENT ISRAELIS, HOWEVER, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE ARAB ASSUMPTIONS ARE LARGELY INCORRECT AND THAT THE CAMPAIGN ON UNCLASSIFIED

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WHICH THEY EMBARKED LAST SEPTEMBER IS FLOUNDERING BECAUSE THEY FAILED TO FORESEE HOW ISRAEL WOULD RESPOND TO IT.

3. EGYPT, SYRIA, JORDAN AND THEIR BANKERS IN SAUDI ARABIA HAVE ASSUMED THAT ISRAEL WAS SO DEPENDENT ON MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID FROM THE UNITED STATES IT HOULD BE FORCED TO SUBMIT TO AN AMERICAN PEACE PLAN, WHICH THE ARABS ASSUMED IN TURN WOULD PROMOTE THEIR INTERESTS.
4. THE ISRAELIS, HOWEVER, ARE MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THEY

ARE PREPARED TO DEFY THE UNITED STATES RATHER THAN COMPROMISE ON ISSUES THEY SEE AS VITAL TO THEIR SECURITY. SIGNALS EMANATING FROM WASHINGTON THAT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES THE UNITED STATES MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ADMIT THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TO THE GENEVA TALKS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE MEETING FIERY RESISTANCE HERE. PRIME MINISTER MANAHEM BEGIN IS PLEDGED NEVER TO DEAL WITH THE PLO, WHICH HE CALLS A GENOCIDAL BAND OF TERRORISTS.

5. WHILE DIGGING IN AGAINST POSSIBLE US PRESSURE, ISRAELI OFFICIALS ARE EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE THAT THEY CAN AVOID A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH WASHINGTON ON THIS OR ANY OTHER ISSUE. THEY BELIEVE THE AMERICANS WILL YIELD FIRST.

6. "THEY COULD CUT OFF OUR AID, BUT OUR CALCULATION IS THAT THEY WON'T," SAID ONE OF BEGIN'S CLOSEST ADVISERS. A SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAID THAT "THE AIR HAS BEEN CLEARED WITH THE UNITED STATES. PRESIDENT CARTER KNOWS EXACTLY THE PARAMETERS THIS COUNTRY WILL ACCEPT. I DON'T SAY HE LIKES THEM, BUT HE KNOWS WHAT THEY ARE."

7. THE ARABS, LED BY EGYPT, HAVE PROPOSED THAT ISRAEL UNCLASSIFIED

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RETURN TO THE BORDERS THAT EXISTED BEFORE THE 1967 WAR AND THAT A PALESTINIAN STATE OR ENTITY BE CREATED ON THE RELINQUISHED TERRITORY AND LINKED IN SOME WAY WITH JORDAN.

8. THIS FORMULA WAS BASED ON THE BELIEF THAT WHILE ISRAEL WOULD NOT WITHDRAW FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES IN FAVOR OF THE PLO, IT MIGHT BE WILLING TO YIELD THEM TO JORDAN, WHICH THE ARABS BELIEVE ISRAEL SEES AS LESS HOSTILE. THIS ALSO WAS INCORRECT.

9. THE ISRAELIS SAY THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF EVER RETURNING TO THE 1967 BORDERS OR OF PERMITTING THE CREATION OF ANY PALESTINIAN STATE ON ANY TERRITORY THAT THEY MIGHT GIVE UP. REMEMBERING THAT JORDAN JOINED THE OTHER ARAB STATES IN THE 1967 WAR, THE ISRAELIS TRUST JORDAN NOT MUCH MORE THAN THEY TRUST THE PALESTINIANS, AND SAY THAT EVEN IF SOME POLITICAL CONTROL OVER THE WEST BANK REVERTS TO ARAB HANDS, THEY WILL NOT GIVE UP THEIR SECURITY CONTROL.

10. THERE IS A RAGING INTERNAL DEBATE HERE OVER HOW FAR ISRAEL SHOULD GO IN PRESSING ITS CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE WEST BANK, BUT EVEN THE MODERATES OPPOSED TO ANNEXATION SAY THEY WOULD NOT SUPPORT A TOTAL PULLOUT.

11. "PERHAPS WE COULD GIVE MOST OF IT TO JORDAN IN EXCHANGE FOR FULL PEACE," SAID YIGAL YADIN, LEADER OF

THE MODERATE OPPOSITION DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE,
"BUT A TOTAL PULLOUT IN FAVOR OF THE PALESTINIANS, THAT
WOULD BE SUICIDE."

12. ARAB LEADERS UNDERSTAND THAT THE ISRAELIS DO NOT
BELIEVE THEIR PROFESSIONS OF PEACEFUL INTENT AND THEY
HAVE SUGGESTED SOME FORM OF INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES
OR AMERICAN DEFENSE PACTS TO ASSURE ISRAEL'S SECURITY
AFTER WITHDRAWAL FROM THE TERRITORIES. THE ISRAELIS
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SAY THIS SHOWS A FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND THE VERY NATURE
OF THE JEWISH STATE--IT EXISTS TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT
ITSELF AND ITS CITIZENS, NOT TO RELY ON OTHERS.

13. THE ARABS ALSO MISCALCULATED WHEN THEY CHOSE TO
CARRY ON AS IF THE NEW GOVERNMENT HEADED BY BEGIN WERE
NO DIFFERENT FROM ITS PREDECESSOR.

14. THEY HAD SUCCEEDED IN PUTTING THE LABOR GOVERNMENT
OF YITZHAK RABIN ON THE DEFENSIVE WITH THEIR REPEATED
DECLARATIONS THAT THEY WERE TO GO TO GENEVA AND
EXCHANGE PEACE FOR TERRITORY. BEGIN, IN HIS SHORT TIME
IN OFFICE, IS SEEN EVEN BY HIS OPPONENTS AS HAVING
BROUGHT ISRAEL OUT OF ITS DIPLOMATIC CROUCH AND INTO A
NEW SENSE OF CONFIDENCE BY HIS REAFFIRMATION OF ISRAEL'S
NATIONAL PURPOSE, HIS OFFERS TO NEGOTIATE THE ISSUES
DIRECTLY WITH THE ARABS, AND HIS PERSONAL POPULARITY.

15. ARAB LEADERS OFTEN ARGUE THAT THEY HAVE GONE AS
FAR AS THEY CAN TOWARD PEACE WITH ISRAEL WITHOUT GET-
TING SOMETHING IN RETURN. ESPECIALLY IN EGYPT AND SAUDI
ARABIA, IT IS ARGUED THAT THE ARABS HAVE OFFERED TO GO
TO GENEVA, HAVE NEUTRALIZED THE HARDLINE STATES THAT
OPPOSE ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL, HAVE CURBED THE
PALESTINIAN GUERRILLAS AND HAVE GENERALLY SHOWN THEM-
SELVES TO BE PEACEABLE MODERATES. YET, THEY ARE A LONG
WAY FROM CONVINCING THE ISRAELIS, WHO SEE ONLY IMPLAC-
ABLE HOSTILITY IN WHICH TACTICS MAY CHANGE, BUT NEVER
THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF DESTROYING THE JEWISH STATE.

16. ,WE DON'T BUY THE ARGUMENT THAT THIS GROUP OF ARAB
LEADERS ARE MODERATES," AN AUTHORITATIVE GOVERNMENT
OFFICIAL SAID. "THERE IS NOTHING MODERATE ABOUT ASSAD,"
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A REFERENCE TO SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFEZ ASSAD.

17. THE ISRAELIS EXPECTED SIGNS OF ACCOMMODATION FROM
EGYPT AFTER THE SINAI DISENGAGEMENT, AGREEMENT OF

1975, BUT AS THIS OFFICIAL PUT IT, "WE SEE EGYPT IN THE VANGUARD OF ALL ANTI-ISRAEL ACTIVITIES."

18. BY REFUSING TO NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE ISRAELIS AND BY SUCH INTERNATIONAL ACTS AS THREATENING REPRISALS AGAINST PORTUGAL FOR ITS PLAN TO OPEN AN EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV, THE ARABS HAVE SHOWN THEIR TRUE COLORS, WHICH ARE NOT THOSE OF PEACE, THE ISRAELIS ARGUE.

19. "THEY USED TO HOPE TO FINISH OFF ISRAEL IN ONE STROKE. NOW THEY'RE TRYING TO DO IT PIECE BY PIECE," A HIGH-RANKING ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID. "THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND ISRAEL AND THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES. IT LEADS THEM TO TOTAL MISCALCULATION."

20. MANY ISRAELIS ARE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A BREACH WITH THE UNITED STATES. FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER SHIMON PERES, LEADER OF THE LABOR OPPOSITION, SAYS IT IS "UNWISE, FOR ISRAEL TO HAVE ANYTHING LESS THAN FULL AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON ON WHAT KIND OF SETTLEMENT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. EVEN PERES, HOWEVER, DISCOUNTS THE POSSIBILITY THAT CARTER, IN HIS DETERMINATION TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB STATES, WOULD BEND ISRAEL'S WILL TO HIS OWN.

21. "THERE IS CLEARCUT AGREEMENT NOT TO HAVE AN IMPOSED SETTLEMENT," HE SAID. "BESIDES, IMPOSED SOLUTIONS MUST BE SOLUTIONS. IMPOSITION FOR ITSELF IS NOT THE ANSWER. AND IF IT'S A SOLUTION, YOU DON'T HAVE TO IMPOSE IT."

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22. THE ISRAELIS WERE STUNG BY AMERICAN CRITICISM OF BEGIN'S DECISION TO GRANT LEGAL STATUS TO THREE JEWISH SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK THAT HAD BEEN SET UP IN DEFIANCE OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT. INFORMED SOURCES HERE SAY, HOWEVER THAT BEGIN HAS QUIETLY SHELVED HIS COMMITMENT TO SET UP 20 MORE SUCH SETTLEMENTS THIS SUMMER, IN AN APPARENT GESTURE TO AMERICAN OPINION.

23. THE ARABS HAVE MADE IT AN ARTICLE OF FAITH THAT PARTIAL SETTLEMENTS, INTERIM OR BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, STEP-BY-STEP DIPLOMACY ARE NO LONGER POSSIBLE, THAT THEY ARE RELICS OF THE KISSINGER ERA AND THAT PEACE CAN BE ACHIEVED ONLY IN A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT AT GENEVA THAT WOULD INCLUDE COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

24. ON THIS FUNDAMENTAL POINT, AS ON SO MANY OTHERS,

THEIR PERCEPTION DIFFERS FROM THAT OF THE ISRAELIS.
HERE IT SEEMS ENTIRELY LOGICAL TO CONCLUDE THAT UNDER
THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES GENEVA WOULD BE FUTILE AND THE
ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS TO RETREAT TO PARTIAL OR STEP-BY-
STEP APPROACHES.

25. "IF THROUGH ARAB RESISTANCE, GENEVA PROVES TO BE
IMPOSSIBLE, BEGIN TOLD A GROUP OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN
SUPPORTERS, "WE CAN CONTINUE BY OTHER MEANS. LET THE
UNITED STATES USE ITS GOOD OFFICES IN JERUSALEM, IN
CAIRO, IN DAMASCUS IN AMMAN, IN BEIRUT IF NEED BE. LET
THE MIXED COMMISSIONS BE FORMED" AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY
PROPOSED AND AS EGYPT HAD AGREED, ONLY TO BE OVERRULED
BY SYRIA.

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26. BEGIN AND HIS ADVISERS INSIST THEY ARE READY FOR
PEACE AND THEY WANT PEACE, BUT THEY HAVE TOTALLY
REJECTED THE ARAB VISION OF HOW IT CAN BE ACHIEVED.
IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, THEY SAY THEY ARE CONFIDENT
THAT THE ARABS WILL CHANGE THEIR VISION, WHICH MAY
MEAN THAT ISRAEL'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE ARABS IS AS
FLAWED AS THE ARAB UNDERSTANDING OF ISRAEL. CHRISTOPHER

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